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643 The *ariki-mau* was respected because of his mana, his influence over nature, and the magic connected with his person, but he was certainly not a ruler or civilian chief. As a direct descendant of the first king who settled on the island and thus of the gods, the *ariki-mau* had a status superior to that of other chiefs or heads of tribes, but he probably had little authority over them. Though the king did not interfere in the intertribal wars, he may occasionally have acted as mediator in quarrels. His lack of real power and exalted position is shown by the following historical incident which took place just before 1862:

> The Ngaure tribe defeated the Miru whom they took as slaves (*mata-kio*). The king, his son Kamakoi, and his grandson Maurata were held in captivity in the territory of the Ngaure and were not rescued until a few years later by the Miru who had in the meantime united with the Tupa-hotu.

In view of all available evidence, kingship on Easter Island may be defined as follows. The king was the man with the most aristocratic pedigree and the most exalted social position on the island. His person was overflowing with mana and his sacredness caused him to be feared and respected. His function in society was to insure through his very being the abundance of crops and the fertility of the ground and to exercise his influence on animal life. Certain religious activities were derived from his sacredness and he held supervisory control over various practices connected with religion.

Priests

793 554 [565] Very little information is available about the status of priests (*ivi-atua*) (family of the gods) except that, according to Roussel, their social rank was next to that of the *ariki*. They were feared and respected, and the attitude of the common people toward them was probably similar to that observed toward the king or other high chiefs. The fact that native traditions, referring to certain important ceremonies, insist that these were performed by *ariki-paka*, implies that some high priests belonged to the families of kings. Very few allusions to *ivi-atua* are made in legends, but by analogy with Mangareva and the rest of Polynesia, we may suppose that they had a great deal of influence and played an important part in the history of the island. Their power and prestige seem to have been annihilated before the missionaries came, since they made no opposition to the introduction of Christianity. Accounts by the missionaries do not allude to them.

Experts and Craftsmen

463 An expert in any profession is called *maori*. The chanters or reciters of genealogies were *maori*, as well as the carvers of the big images, and the wood cutters. The common Polynesian word *tahunga* seems to have been known formerly, but it is not in the modern language. *Tahonga* is a formative

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Makemake. Later missionaries confirm the statements of the Spaniards. The information given by Zumbohm (230, vol. 6, pp. 117-131) is especially valuable:

> Among the gods and goddesses of their mythology, our Indians acknowledge one they call the Great God, Etua, who they say is superior to all the others. Ko Make-make was his name. He rewarded the good and punished the bad. Our islanders apparently do not suspect the existence of an evil spirit and no proper name in their language expressed such a concept. In order to designate the devil, we were obliged to add to their vocabulary the word *tiaporo* (devil).
>
> However Makemake gave orders to the men through priests, male and female. These imposters, very able ventriloquists, pretended that the great god spoke through their mouths and asked sacrifices of chickens, sweet potatoes, fish, etc. Of course everything was to the advantage of the representatives of the so-called divinity.
>
> What was more horrible was to see sometimes small children disappear: Make-make had required victims, the priests said. But as a matter of fact they had themselves killed, roasted, and eaten the sacrifice. "How happy we are," some poor mothers told us. "We are no longer afraid that our children will be taken away as formerly."
>
> Makemake manifested his anger by thunder. We were told when we came of a bad man who had been killed by lightning.
>
> The great god had no wife. As for the others I counted ten of them who lived with families as our Kanakas told us.
>
> I did not observe that our Oceanians attributed vices to the supreme god. As to the atrocities committed in his name they either did not appear as such, because of the superstitions maintained by the priests, or they were attributed to the priests whom they blamed for not being the true interpreters of the god's will.
>
> Through the will and work of the supreme god, the first man and the first woman came from the earth more or less as the plant that springs up from the soil. They had immortal souls as had all their descendants. (See also Palmer, 171, p. 774.)

Geiseler (87, pp. 31, 33) gives the following details about Makemake:

> Their religion is poor. Their principal gods are Makemake, the creator, and Haua. To these deities they offered the first products of the soil.
>
> Makemake is represented by the eggs of the birds of the island of Motu-nui on the southwest side of the Rano-kao crater and they are fetched in July, August, and September. During all the other months they are tapu. Makemake is worshipped in the form of sea birds carved in the rock or painted.
>
> Makemake is the most feared god. He kills and eats the souls of the dead when they have been bad when alive. He protects the souls of the good which under his protection after death sleep on the island . . .
>
> The principal god Makemake is not directly worshipped, but receives honors through a series of wooden images which are carried around at the feasts in honor of the god.
>
> They [the natives] do not seem to have legends or ideas about the creation of the world, the origin of the natural phenomena. Makemake made everything—the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars. They do not know apparently any more.

The myth transcribed below explains the origin of Makemake who was born from a skull:

> There was a priestess watching over a skull on a rock in the bay of Tonga-riki, in front of the ahu Tonga-riki. The spirit Puna of the ahu was always looking at the priestess. One day a wave came and took the skull that was watched on the rock in front of the bay of Tonga-riki. The wave swept away the skull from above; it floated. The eyes of the priestess saw the skull. She leaped to take it, she swam behind the skull which floated ahead. She arrived in the middle of the sea, she was tired, she landed

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539 '13 '16 If the end of the chant were not so garbled, it might give a hint as to its practical value and the circumstances in which it was recited. The last verse stresses the importance of the yam (*uhi*) and sweet potato (*kumara*), which were the staple foods of the island.

PRIESTS

'93 Our knowledge of the nature and organization of the priesthood is so slight and so confused that no clear distinction may be made between the high priests and the ordinary magicians or sorcerers. It is not possible to ascertain whether the ancient priesthood was always loosely organized or whether the original institutions were forgotten after the Peruvian raid of 1862 which crushed the native civilization of the island.

Undoubtedly the gods were attended by priests, although Geiseler (87, p. 33) and Routledge (194, p. 239) declare there were no priests, and Thomson (215, p. 470) affirms that native priests were simply wizards and sorcerers. However, Roussel (190, p. 360), our best authority on Easter Island, says: "There were priests and priestesses. Their functions were reduced to very few things: to preside at the rejoicings on the occasion of the birth of a child and to drive away the bad spirits of a sick man." Priests also composed and recited chants in honor of the dead. Such limited activity does not tally with the exalted social position of the priests; according to Roussel they were next in rank after the king.

'93 '87 '82 We have already seen (p. 312) that Makemake manifested his will through male and female priests. These servants of the gods were inspired by the deity who entered their bodies and spoke through their mouths. The offerings of chickens, fish, and sweet potatoes were received by these priests, who also demanded human sacrifices. This information, although scant, shows that on Easter Island the power and duties of the priests did not differ very much from the general Polynesian pattern.

'93 My informants and those of Routledge always attributed the performance of the religious and magic rites to the *ariki-paka*, who were noblemen of the Miru tribe (p. 129). While it is very likely that the chief priests were recruited from the royal or aristocratic families, it is doubtful that all the *ariki-paka* were fit for these functions.

171 '93 The close association between nobility and priesthood is a common feature in Polynesian culture, many instances of which have been recorded on other islands. The tapus surrounding the *ariki* were, in many respects, analogous to those of the priests. The sacredness of kingship and nobility linked the *ariki* very closely with ceremonial life. A hint of the priestly nature of certain *ariki* functions is to be found in a statement made by Geiseler (87, p. 33) on the authority of Salmon: "In early days when the kings enjoyed important power and respect, they functioned as priests and they started and they led the religious festivities."

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The term *ivi-atua* (lineage of the gods) is interpreted by the present population as magician or sorcerer, and they use the same word for a charm or a spell. The *koromaki* (the one who violently desires something) were also in the category of priests. Usually the word *koromaki* was followed by the mention of the thing wanted, as rain, fish, and so on. These *koromaki* were expert in casting spells and had the power to kill enemies or to benefit people who resorted to them. Apparently their function was similar to that of the *ivi-atua*. Here again is manifest the tendency to represent all the ancient priests as wizards.

In Mangareva the general term for priest is *taura*; Laval gives it as *tahura*. The name *tahura* on Easter Island is applied to the servants of the king, but as *tahura* may also mean "expert", the fact that the king's attendants were *tahura* does not imply that they were priests.

Divine Possession

It is evident from the allusions of the missionaries that in Easter Island, as in all of Polynesia, the gods were supposed to take possession of the priests and to use them as mediums between themselves and the people. The present natives remember that when a priest was possessed by a god, he spoke in a shrill, high-pitched voice. In the legend of the young men who pretended to be Makemake, it is said that " . . . they made their voice like that of a god (*hakaatua i te reo*)." The word used in Easter Island, as in most of Polynesia, to mean possession by a god was the verb *uru* (to penetrate, to enter). To express the action of the priest Uru-a-rei, who tried to exterminate the Miru by means of religious rites, my informant used the word *uru* and translated it "to make sorcery." The story tells that the priest was dizzy because he turned round and round (*mimiro*) in order to make his *uru*.

Sorcerers

Sorcery seems to have been practiced on Easter Island to much the same extent and in much the same manner as on other Polynesian islands. Inspirational priests (*ivi-atua*) or sorcerers (*tangata taku*) had at their service familiar spirits through whom they cured or killed people or accomplished difficult tasks (p. 319). There were numerous charms connected with every action. There was even a spell to make people hurry.

A person who wanted to get rid of an enemy called in a sorcerer, to whom he presented food cooked especially for the purpose. The magician dug a hole in the ground and in it he buried a white cock with head turned down. The place was trodden upon, and after a few days the cock's death was followed by that of the person against whom the magic rite was directed. Such procedure was known as *taku mo mate* (charm for death). This typical prac-

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Direct evidence that the corpses of the victims were eaten is given by Zumbohm (230, vol. 6, p. 117) and Geiseler (87, p. 31) who writes as follows:

> The oldest people remember, and still recall, that war prisoners were eaten. When many of them were caught they were shut into huts built for the purpose in front of the stone idols and they were kept in them and fed until the time of festivities of the victory feast. On occasion of such ceremonies the prisoners were killed in honor of the gods and eaten.

Ceremony to Invoke Rain

A faint memory has been preserved of ceremonies performed to invoke rain from the god Hiro. When a drought threatened crops the people resorted to various magic rites and to the *ariki-paka* (noble priests?) who addressed prayers to the god. According to Routledge (194, p. 242), the people anxious to obtain rain first asked the king for help. The king then sent to the scorched fields a younger son and another *ariki-paka*. No reference to this special choice was made by my modern informants, but Estella (79, p. 21) was also told that the king acted as an intermediary between the people and the priest.

The *ariki-paka* who presided over the ceremony were painted "on one side red, on the other black with a strip down the center" (194, p. 242). They went to the top of a hill, taking seaweed (*miri-tonu*) and pieces of drift coral (*karakama*). The magical significance of this offering of things soaked with sea water is obvious. The priest addressed a prayer to Hiro to obtain rain (*he ako ki te ua*, he sang for rain). A fragment of this prayer is still remembered by the natives:

E te ua, mata-val roa a Hiro e,	O rain, long tears of Hiro,
Ka hoa mai koe ki raro,	You fall down,
Ka rei mai koe ki raro,	You beat down,
E te ua, mata-val roa a Hiro e.	O rain, long tears of Hiro.

The natives told Estella (79, p. 31) that the priest remained on the hill where he had made the prayer until rain came, even though he might wait a long time. When the water fell, he descended the hill and ran about so that the rain would follow him and benefit all the land.

Private Rites

Certain rites were observed in behalf of a household or an individual. A new house could not be occupied until suitable rites had been performed and special food eaten in it. The food prepared for this purpose was cooked in a special earth oven and served to the priest in a corner of the new house where he ate alone. There is some evidence that the same duty was likewise incumbent on the king.

Rites for fertility of the fields required priests to bury or spread pieces of coral or seaweed on the plantations. Such charms had a favorable influence on the crop.

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Easter Islanders who wanted to increase their poultry so that they might celebrate a feast (*koro*) had the *ariki-paka* make a charm which contributed to the rapid increase of chickens. When invited to eat chicken meat, the priests received the rump (*huahua*) of the bird.

BIRD CULT

Until the second half of the nineteenth century the annual feast of the bird man (*tangata-manu*), held at Orongo, was extremely important to Easter Islanders. The rites performed were not only connected with the cult of the greatest god of the island, Makemake, but were endowed with special social significance, since ideas of prestige and economic privileges were closely associated with these ceremonies. The ostensible purpose of the ceremony was to obtain the first egg of the *manu-tara* (*Sterna hirundo*, sooty tern), the quest for which was entrusted to servants (*hopu*). The chief whose servant discovered the first egg received the envied title of bird-man (*tangata-manu*). This title, surrounded with tapus, brought to its holder and to members of his lineage certain material advantages and vast moral and religious benefits.

The far-reaching significance of the bird cult is illustrated by the extensive remains at Orongo, one of the most interesting archaeological sites on the island, and by the frequent use of bird and bird-man motifs in all forms of Easter Island art—tablets, wooden images, petroglyphs. The importance of birds in Easter Island culture and the use of birds as the basis for a religious cult are undoubtedly due to the poverty of the island fauna in which birds were the only conspicuous creatures. Not only were they the most interesting living thing next to man, but they contributed thousands of eggs for food.

The bird cult did not die out until about 50 years ago, long after the introduction of Christianity. Almost all recent visitors to Easter Island have studied the bird-man cult. Consequently there is a mass of contradictory material. Routledge, realizing the essential part this cult must have played in the ancient religious and social life, devoted much attention to it, and interviewed the last man who had participated in the ceremonies at Orongo. My information was gained mostly from Tepano, who was well acquainted with some details because his uncle was one of the last bird-men. The information he gave substantiates that gathered by Routledge and adds a few more details.

Orongo

The ceremonies and feasts connected with the bird cult were performed at Orongo, on the slopes of Rano-kao at the southwest point of the island. The village of Orongo lies on the narrow ridge separating the sea from the crater lake. It was temporarily occupied at the time of the yearly feast and deserted the rest of the year.

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who was about the only able-bodied man on the island who did not participate. It was decidedly a go-as-you-please-race, every man selecting his route to the sea by the circuitous paths or directly over the face of the cliff, and many fatal falls are recorded as the result. The swim to Motu Kau Kau was a trifling matter, the chief difficulty being to return with an egg unbroken through the general scramble.

The *hopu* swam over to the island, supported by big bundles of reeds used as floats (*pora*). Carefully wrapped in the mats of the *pora* were provisions of all sorts which were "still hot when they landed on Motu-nui." To cross the 2 kilometers between the main island and Motu-nui was not an easy sport. The waves are generally high and often sharks haunt these waters.

On the islet, the *hopu* were provided with food which was cooked by the people gathered at Orongo and taken over to the island by servants who used *pora* for transportation. When the weather was stormy communications between Motu-nui and the main island ceased. Those who were provident dried banana and sweet potato skins in the sun to be eaten in case of emergency.

Whilst the *hopu* waited on the islet for the first *manu-tara* eggs, their masters and the members of the *ao* performed various rites at Orongo to propitiate the gods. Dances were held in front of the houses, and chants were sung for the gods by the *rongorongo* who occupied the houses at the end of the stone village, near the carved rocks. The dual political division of the island was reflected even in the abodes of the narrators during the feast. Those from Hotu-iti dwelt in the western group of houses, and those from Tuu in the houses to the east. Sometimes the king went to Mataveri to call on the people gathered there, but he never ascended to Orongo. At least that was the custom adopted by Nga-ara who was probably following an old tradition. Offerings and prayers were addressed to the gods Makemake and Haua who had created the birds and established the cult in honor of themselves. Makemake designated the man to be *tangata-manu* and thus incarnate the god. Routledge (194, p. 260) mentions *vie* Hoa and *vie* Kenatea among the deities who were worshipped at Orongo.

Tepano stated repeatedly that at Orongo there were many old men (*koro-hua*) who were sorcerers; they recited charms for the success of the competitors and had long talks with the gods, who entered some of the houses of Orongo. When a god was thought to be in a house, only the priest could enter and inquire about the contestant's chances of winning. While the priests tried to make the deities favorable toward those who resorted to them (*hatu o te manu kia Haua, kia kia Makemake*), the young people were busy making earth ovens, the contents of which they distributed lavishly among the priests or sent to the *hopu* on the island. Some of the food was set apart by the *ivi-atua* and consecrated to the gods with the traditional formula, "Ka too ma Haua, ma Makemake . . . " Tepano's reference to the sharp voices of the priests when they spoke to the gods is probably a personal memory of some

6: Anonymous T-5 (1770)1908
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411 They did the same with a knife and with a cutlass, which they took hold of indifferently by the point or by the hilt.

793 They seem to me to have ministers or priests for their idols; because I observed that on the day which we erected the crosses, when our chaplains went accompanying the holy images, clothed in their cassocks and *pellis*, chanting the litanies, numbers of natives stepped forward on to the path and offered their cloaks, while the women presented hens and pullets, and all cried *Maca Maca*, treating them with much veneration until they had passed beyond the rocks by which the track they were following was encumbered.

609 Sunday, 18th. The natives continued to gather on board in greater number than on the preceding days, so that on this day there have been more than 400 in the frigate. What with men and women they collected in such crowds that it became necessary to send away some in order to make room for others, as we could not contain them on board. To-day at noon I observed the latitude of

131 this bay with the greatest care, which I found to be 27° 26′; and I began on this same day to make a sketch of it, with an outline and views and exact soundings, in order to construct as accurate a chart of it as possible, and one that might serve as a guide and record for the future; though it must be stated that, on account of certain impediments, it was not possible to fix a base-line on shore for trigonometric operations.

Monday, 19th. At 10 in the forenoon our launches came in sight from the eastern part of the island, and our long-boat was told off to give ours a tow, as she had the wind ahead. The Commodore did the same for his. Our launch arrived alongside at one o'clock in the afternoon, with all her people, after having sailed entirely round the island; and the following account was by this means obtained.

8: Behrens T-5 (1721-1722) 1908
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fowls, or other produce, would cast it all down before us and retire with all possible speed, and go their way without ceremony.

As for their complexion they are brownish, about the hue of a Spaniard, yet one finds some among them of a darker shade and others quite white, and no less also a few of a reddish tint as if somewhat severely tanned by the sun. Their ears were so long that they hung down as far as to the shoulders. Some wore white ornaments in the lobes as a special embellishment. They were painted on their bodies with wonderful birds and animals, although some were handsomer than others.

The women had their features streaked for the most part with a red pigment, which is of a much brighter shade than any we have anywhere else seen or found; but we do not know from what they make this beautiful colour. The women were all clothed with red and white wraps [*decken*]; and each had a small hat made of straw or rushes. They sat down before us and disrobed, laughed, and were very friendly. Others called from a distance from their houses and beckoned us with the hand to come to them; and there was, in the place where we were standing, a village of about twenty houses.

The people had, to judge by appearances, no weapons; although, as I remarked, they relied in case of need on their gods or idols which stand erected all along the sea shore in great numbers, before which they fall down and invoke them. These idols were all hewn out of stone, and in the form of a man, with long ears, adorned on the head with a crown, yet all made with skill: whereat we wondered not a little. A clear space was reserved round these objects of worship by laying stones to a distance of twenty or thirty paces. I took some of the people to be priests, because they paid more reverence to the gods than did the rest; and showed themselves much more devout in their ministrations. One could also distinguish these from the other people quite well, not only by their wearing great white plugs in their ear lobes, but in having the head wholly shaven and hairless. One of them was with us on board the ship as above related. They wore a head-dress of white and black feathers which were just like storks' feathers: so that we thought it likely that some of the storks in migrating from Europe at their accustomed season must rest here[1]. .....As the evening was drawing near we re-

[1] Here intervenes a long, speculative, and uninstructive dissertation on the migration of storks, quite irrelevant to the narrative.